

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

----- 001609

O 101902Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1350

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 11223

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: CASC, CU, US

SUBJECT: LUNT CASE - PRISONER EXCHANGE

REF: STATE 160741

1. AT MEETING WITH PFUND AND KLINGAMAN, JULY 10, VOGEL SAID THAT REGRETTABLY WHILE MATTERS HAD APPEARED EARLIER TO TAKE STEP FORWARD, THEY HAD NOW TAKEN TWO STEPS BACKWARD. GDR HAD OPERATED ON UNDERSTANDING THAT AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE TO LUNT/THOMPSON EXCHANGE HAD BEEN REACHED, EVEN TO POINT WHERE HONECKER HAD WRITTEN LETTER TO CASTRO CONCERNING GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN SOCIALIST BROTHER NATIONS ON WHAT VOGEL DESCRIBED AS THE GDR ECONOMIC PROJECT WITH CUBA THAT REPRESENTS THE QUID PRO QUO FOR CUBA'S RELEASE OF LUNT. HOWEVER, DIRECT QUESTIONS BY GDR AT LOWER LEVEL AS TO REASONS FOR SUBSEQUENT CUBAN DELAY IN AGREEING TO TECHNICAL DETAILS HAD REVEALED THAT CUBANS WERE DICKERING WITH BASIC UNDERSTANDING. CUBANS HAVE INDICATED THEY HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT USG WOULD BE WILLING TO EXCHANGE PUERTO RICAN NATIONALIST LOLITA LEBRON FOR LAWRENCE LUNT. VOGEL SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER THIS BELIEF WAS BASED ON NEW CONTACTS SINCE PRIOR TURN-DOWN OF CUBAN OFFER OF LUNT-LEBRON EXCHANGE, OR WHETHER CUBANS CONSIDERED THAT IF USG IS PREPARED TO ARRANGE FOR RELEASE OF THOMPSON, IT WOULD BE ABLE AND WILLING TO RELEASE

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LEBRON INSTEAD OF THOMPSON. VOGEL SAID THAT A MERE CON-

FIRMATION BY HIM AND BY GDR TO CUBANS OF REASONS EARLIER
GIVEN BY MEEHAN WHY LEBRON RELEASE BY US WAS NOT
POSSIBLE, NAMELY THAT SHE WAS TERRORIST (GEWALTSTAETER)
AS OPPOSED TO PERSON CONVICTED OF SPYING, WOULD NOT
SUFFICE AT THIS POINT TO CONVINCE CUBANS. HE SUGGESTED
THAT USG MAKE THIS POINT AND CONFIRM IMPOSSIBILITY OF
LEBRON RELEASE THROUGH THE NORMAL CHANNEL THROUGH WHICH
THE LEBRON/LUNT OFFER HAD BEEN MADE (THE BELGIANS,
ACCORDING TO STATE 35797). IN ANY EVENT, CUBANS MAY
HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO RELY ON VOGEL AND GDR, GDR POSSIBLY
BEING SEEN BY CUBANS AS INTERESTED PARTY IN GETTING
BACK THOMPSON, AS RELIABLE CHANNEL FOR FLAT US TURNDOWN
RE LEBRON RELEASE. VOGEL SAID THAT WHILE THIS TYPE OF
REVERSAL WAS NOT UNCOMMON IN DEALING WITH ARABS AND
CUBANS, WE COULD BE SURE THAT HONECKER WOULD LET THE
CUBANS KNOW THAT THEIR ACTION STOOD TO AFFECT THE GDR/
CUBAN ECONOMIC ARRANGEMENT, NEVER DETAILED BY VOGEL.
VOGEL SAID HE THOUGHT LUNT/THOMPSON ARRANGEMENT WOULD
STILL WORK OUT AND THAT THIS MIGHT STILL OCCUR BEFORE
FALL, PROVIDED CUBANS ARE CONVINCED BY USG THAT LEBRON
RELEASE IS OUT OF THE QUESTION. HE MENTIONED THAT IN
CONTEXT OF A COMPLEX MANY-SIDED EXCHANGE INVOLVING
EXCHANGE OF ISRAELI-HELD PRISONERS FROM ISRAEL TO EGYPT,
AND PRISONERS OF ARABS TO ISRAEL, NO AGREEMENT WAS
REACHED TO EXCHANGE TERRORISTS, CONFIRMING HIS GENERAL
EXPERIENCE THAT TERRORISTS HAVE NEVER BEEN EXCHANGED
EXCEPT IN EXCHANGE FOR RELEASE OF INNOCENT HOSTAGES. IF
THIS POINT WERE MADE BY USG IN DISTINGUISHING OFFENSE

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1351

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 11223

EXDIS

FOR WHICH LEBRON WAS IMPRISONED FROM THAT FOR WHICH
THOMPSON WAS IMPRISONED, THEN LUNT RELEASE FOR THOMPSON
SHOULD GET BACK ON THE RAILS.

2. ABOVE LEAVES US WITH NEED TO ACT ALONG LINES
SUGGESTED BY VOGEL TO ACHIEVE PROGRESS. WHEN EMBASSY
HAS BEEN INFORMED WHAT HAS BEEN DONE, INCLUDING SOME
DETAILS, WE WOULD PASS THOSE DETAILS TO VOGEL AND AWAIT
FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.

3. VOGEL SAID GDR HAD NO FURTHER INFORMATION ON
THOMPSON'S ALLEGED SON.

4. RE AMCIT STEINER IMPRISONED IN GDR, VOGEL AGAIN
STRESSED THAT THERE WAS NO LINK TO LUNT/THOMPSON
MATTER, AND SAID HE HOPED STEINER RELEASE POSSIBLE IN
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER BEFORE END OF 1975, AS GESTURE OF
GOOD WILL TO USG.

5. IN PFUND ABSENCE UNTIL SEPTEMBER 2, KLINGAMAN WILL
BE ACTION OFFICER ON THIS MATTER.
HILLENBRAND

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